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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
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10/660,524

09/12/2003

BRIAN ELI BERL ILLION

13331-004

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1059 7590 02/12/2009

BERESKIN AND PARR
40 KING STREET WEST
BOX 401
TORONTO, ON M5H 3Y2
CANADA

EXAMINER

CHAMPAGNE, LUNA

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

3627

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DELIVERY MODE

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PAPER

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Office Action Summary	Application No. 10/660,524	Applicant(s) ELI BERL ILLION, BRIAN	
	Examiner LUNA CHAMPAGNE	Art Unit 3627	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 22 December 2008.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-23 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-23 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413) |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application |
| Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

Continued Examination Under 37 CFR 1.114

1. A request for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, including the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e), was filed in this application after final rejection. Since this application is eligible for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, and the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e) has been timely paid, the finality of the previous Office action has been withdrawn pursuant to 37 CFR 1.114.

Applicant's submission filed on 12/22/08 has been entered. Claims 1-23 are presented for examination.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

2. The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

3. Claim 1 recites the limitation "one of the purchasers" in line 5. There is insufficient antecedent basis for this limitation in the claim. Applicant originally claimed "a purchaser" in the preamble. It is unclear whether the delivery process is between "a seller and multiple purchasers" or "a seller and a purchaser".

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 101

4. 35 U.S.C. 101 reads as follows:

Whoever invents or discovers any new and useful process, machine, manufacture, or composition of matter, or any new and useful improvement thereof, may obtain a patent therefor, subject to the conditions and requirements of this title.

The claimed invention is directed to non-statutory subject matter.

Claims 1-12 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 101. Based on Supreme Court precedent and recent Federal Circuit decisions, a 35 U.S.C § 101 process must (1) be tied to a particular machine or (2) transform underlying subject matter (such as an article or materials) to a different state or thing. In re Bilski et al, 88 USPQ 2d 1385 CAFC (2008); Diamond v. Diehr, 450 U.S. 175, 184 (1981); Parker v. Flook, 437 U.S. 584, 588 n.9 (1978); Gottschalk v. Benson, 409 U.S. 63, 70 (1972); Cochrane v. Deener, 94 U.S. 780,787-88 (1876).

An example of a method claim that would not qualify as a statutory process would be a claim that recited purely mental steps. Thus, to qualify as a § 101 statutory process, the claim should positively recite the particular machine to which it is tied, for example by identifying the apparatus that accomplishes the method steps, or positively recite the subject matter that is being transformed.

Here, applicant's method steps are not tied to a particular machine and do not perform a transformation. Thus, the claims are non-statutory.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

5. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

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(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

6. Claims 1-3, 6-10, 12-15, 18-21, and 23 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being unpatentable by Bloom (6,974,928 B2), in view Kuelbs et al. (7,136,830 B1).

Re claim 1, Bloom discloses a method of delivering one of a plurality of identical products associated with a seller to a purchaser, determining which of said plurality of delivery nodes is closest to said purchaser (*see e.g. col. 10, lines 51-57*); and a closest delivery node has been determined in (c), providing the closest one of said identical products to the delivery node identified in (c) along the delivery circuit; and then transporting said closest one of said identical products from the delivery node identified in (c) to said purchaser (*see e.g. col. 1, lines 47-53*).

Bloom does not explicitly disclose (a) a distribution module associated with said first delivery module for / transporting the identical products in a delivery circuit that includes a plurality of delivery nodes by providing the identical products to the delivery circuit in advance of being ordered by one of the purchasers, and by transporting the identical products between delivery nodes at a first speed; (b) determining if one of said identical products being transported within the delivery circuit has been ordered by one of the purchasers; (e) when (b) is not true then continuing to transport said product within the delivery circuit

However, Kuelbs et al. disclose (a) a distribution module associated with said first delivery module for / transporting the identical products in a delivery circuit that includes

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a plurality of delivery nodes by providing the identical products to the delivery circuit in advance of being ordered by one of the purchasers, and by transporting the identical products between delivery nodes at a first speed (*see e.g. col.13, lines 33-37 -The producer may also sort and pack products which are not yet sold but which will be either sold in transit or will be sold after delivery to conventional wholesale or retail channels of trade*); (b) determining if one of said identical products being transported within the delivery circuit has been ordered by one of the purchasers (*see e.g. col. 17, lines 42-orders will be allocated against individual items in-transit; col. 59-60 – customers placing orders while the merchandise was in transit*); (e) when (b) is not true then continuing to transport said product within the delivery circuit (*see e.g. col. 17, lines 60-65*)

Therefore, at the time of the invention, it would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art, to modify Bloom and include the steps (a), (b), (e), above, as cited by Kuelbs, in order to minimize order processing time and cost of delivery by providing products to quickly fulfill anticipated demand.

Re the system claim 13, the same rationale, as in the rejection for claim 1, applies.

Re claims 2 and 14, Bloom discloses a method wherein (a) further comprises associating each of said identical products with a unique tracking number and wherein (*see e.g. col.2, lines 35-41*), (d) further comprises determining the destination address

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of said purchaser and pushing said unique tracking number and destination address to the delivery node identified in (c) prior to the physical arrival of the one of said identical products at the delivery node identified in (c) (see e.g. col. 1, lines 42-45).

Re claims 3 and 15, Bloom discloses a method/system, wherein (a) further comprises associating each of said identical products with a destination node and wherein step (c) further comprises recording said delivery node identified in (c) as the destination node for said closest one of said identical products (see e.g. col. 12, lines 26-30).

Re claims 6 and 18, Bloom discloses a method/system, wherein (d) further comprises transporting the closest one of said identical products through a series of delivery nodes to the delivery node identified in (c) (see e.g. col. 6, lines 14-30).

Re claims 7 and 19, Bloom discloses a method/system, wherein (d) further comprises storing the closest one of said identical products at the delivery node identified in (c) (see e.g. col. 6, lines 32-40).

Re claims 8 and 20, Bloom discloses a method/system, wherein the transportation of the product from said identified delivery node to the purchaser is conducted at a second speed wherein said first speed is less than said second speed (see e.g. col. 143, lines 1-5).

Re claims 9 and 21, Bloom discloses a method/system, wherein the products are transported within a sub-set of said delivery nodes to service a particular section of said delivery circuit (*see e.g. col. 129, lines 35-37*).

Re claim 10, Bloom discloses a method/system, further comprising the delivery of the products from the seller to the delivery circuit (*see e.g. col.8, lines 9-24*).

Re claims 12 and 23, Bloom discloses a method/system, further comprising: (I) determining whether there is a cluster of products within said delivery circuit; (II) (*the needed quantity is zero*), when (I) is true, then rebalancing the flow of said products within said delivery circuit by re-directing at least some of said products (*see e.g. col. 53, lines 5-11*).

7. Claims 4, 5, 16 and 17 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Bloom (6,974,928 B2), in view Kuelbs et al. (7,136,830 B1), in further view of Official Notice.

Claims 4, 5, 16 and 17 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Bloom (6,974,928 B2), in view of Official Notice.

Re claims 4, 5, 16 and 17, Bloom discloses a method/system, wherein (a) further comprises associating each of said identical products with a destination node and a

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default destination node, wherein said destination node is the closest delivery node to the current position of the product (*see e.g. col. 10, lines 41-51*).

Bloom, in view of Kuelbs, do not explicitly disclose a method/system where the default destination node is a delivery node adjacent to the destination node; wherein when the product reaches the destination node, (a) further comprises changing the destination node so that it corresponds to the previous default destination node and to change the default destination node by choosing from the set of delivery nodes adjacent to the destination node.

However, the Examiner takes Official Notice that, it is well known in the art that suppliers first try to deliver to the location closest to the customer and, as a backup, they have a default delivery location, in case delivery is not possible at the first location. It is beneficial in terms of time and money to choose locations in close proximity, as mentioned in Bloom column 10, lines 41-57, where a list of locations is provided to the customer.

Therefore, at the time of the invention, it would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art, to modify Bloom, in view of Kuelbs, and include the steps of where the default destination node is a delivery node adjacent to the destination node; wherein when the product reaches the destination node, (a) further comprises changing the destination node so that it corresponds to the previous default destination node and to change the default destination node by choosing from the set of delivery nodes adjacent to the destination in order in order to save time, provide faster service and increase productivity.

8. Claims 11 and 22 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Bloom (6,974,928 B2), in view Kuelbs et al. (7,136,830 B1), in further view of Kennedy et al. (7,085,729 B1).

Re claims 11 and 22, Bloom, in view of Kuelbs, do not explicitly disclose a method/system, further comprising: (i) estimating demand for the products at each delivery node associated with said delivery circuit; (ii) providing a sufficient quantity of the products from the seller to said delivery circuit for prospective delivery.

However, Kennedy et al. disclose a method/system, further comprising: (i) estimating demand for the products at each delivery node associated with said delivery circuit; (ii) providing a sufficient quantity of the products from the seller to said delivery circuit for prospective delivery (*see e.g. col.2, lines 64-67*).

Therefore, at the time of the invention, it would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art, to modify Bloom, in view of Kuelbs, and include the steps of estimating demand for the products at each delivery node associated with said delivery circuit; (ii) providing a sufficient quantity of the products from the seller to said delivery circuit for prospective delivery, as taught by Kennedy et al., in order to better plan and manage distribution of products.

Response to Arguments

9. Applicant's arguments with respect to claims 1-23 have been considered but are moot in view of the new grounds of rejection. Kuelbs et al. anticipate Applicant's argued

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features that “identical products are provided to the delivery circuit in advance of being ordered by one of the purchasers”; and “when it is determined that one of the identical products has not been ordered, then that product continues to be transported within the delivery circuit”. Please see the rejection.

Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Luna Champagne whose telephone number is (571) 272-7177. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday - Friday 8:30 - 5:00.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner’s supervisor, Florian Zeender can be reached on (571) 272-6790. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

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Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/Luna Champagne/
Examiner, Art Unit 3627

February 3, 2009

/F. Ryan Zeender/

Supervisory Patent Examiner, Art Unit 3627